Legislative Council the privilege of expressing their opinion before His Highness the Maha Raja gives his assent to any law independently of the Council.

(2) There should be a real non-official majority in the Legislative Council. The so-called non-official majority under the new Regulation, II of 1097, was only nominal, since out of the 35 non-official members only 23 could be said to be truly representative of the people of the country, the others being either nominated by Government or elected by special constituencies.

(3) The Regulation should be so amended as to entrust the Legislative Council with full powers of control over the administration of the State finance.

(4) Section 11 (m) of the Regulation should be so altered as to enable the members of Legislative Council to express their views on the Regulation constituting the Council. This change was important because the Government could not gauge public opinion on the reform of the Legislative Council more satisfactorily than through the Council itself.

161. Necessity for an Executive Council.

Mr. N. K. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Neyyattinkara Taluk) said that it was the unfortunate lot of Travancore to have foreigners as Dewans who, however well-intentioned they be, had not the requisite time to study local conditions and introduce the reforms needed by the people. This defect could be remedied by the creation of an Executive Council responsible to the legislature. The Council should consist of 2 members, the Dewan being the President. The members, preferably also the Dewan, should be responsible to the Legislative Council and vacate office when they lost the confidence of the majority in the Legislative Council. The presence of these representatives of the people in the Executive Council would go a long way to remove the misunderstanding of the people against the Government and convince them of the necessity for any fresh taxes that might have to be imposed upon them.

As regards the financial aspect of the introduction of such a reform, the Member said that the necessary funds could be more than made up by the curtailment of the superior staff in the Secretariat which was overmanned.

Mr. N. Madhavan Nair B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) began by saying that the creation of an Executive Council was the only remedy for the evils obtaining in the present machinery of the administration and that the subject had been engaging the attention of the enlightened public of Travancore for some time past. The chief reason which rendered the creation of the Council imperative was the fact that, according to the present system of administration, the Dewan was overwhelmed with work from all sides, with the result that he was deprived of the time and the leisure necessary to carefully study local problems in their relation to local conditions and do good to the people. The help which the Dewan derived from the officers of the Secretariat was little, as the attention of these officers was mainly directed towards the benefit or the gain which a proposed measure would bring to the Government rather than to its bearing, beneficial or otherwise, on the public at large. Again, it had been the unhappy lot of the State to get foreigners as Dewans for a long time past. Although it was an admitted fact that Travancore was indebted not a little for what she was to-day to the great foresight, sagacity and high order of statesmanship displayed by some of her eminent foreign Dewans, it could not be denied that persons of such calibre and turn of mind were not an ordinary phenomenon in these days. The foreign administrators who came here had to study local conditions and institutional practices to inaugurate useful reforms. but they found little time to do all this work in the midst of their multifarious duties. This heavy concentration of work in the Head of the Administration certainly stood in need of modification. The desired relief could come only from a Council of ministers who would associate with the Dewan and share in his responsibilities of administering the State.

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The creation of an Executive Council would moreover ensure a continuity of policy in the various Departments of the State and offer an effective check on the Heads of Departments who had now set themselves up as powerful autocrats in their respective regions. The unequal application of the State finances to important items of public expenditure would also gradually diminish.

The Member then suggested how the Executive Council should be formed so as to usher in a liberal administrative policy. It should consist of three members—all non-officials—exclusive of the Dewan. Each member should be placed in charge of a certain number of Departments coming within the purview of the Legislative Council, the rest being placed under the charge of the Dewan himself. The members of the Council should be elected from the Legislative Council or nominated by the Dewan from among experienced non-officials. The appointment of the Councillors should be subject to the approval of the Legislative Council, and the Executive Council should be responsible to the people through the legislature. The Member then suggested the appointment of experienced officials and non-officials to consider this important question and frame a detailed scheme for the formation and working of the Executive Council.

The Member then concluded by saying that the representatives of the people had already proved their fitness for the reform detailed above at the hands of Government and he prayed that an Executive Council might be created ere long.

Mr. Narayanan Raman (Member, Chirayinkil Taluk) represented that the establishment of an Executive Council responsible to the legislature would be beneficial to the people and that the necessity for such an institution had been brought home to the minds of the people even in out-of-the-way places owing to certain recent high-handed acts on the part of the executive. The necessity for this was rendered keener when the head of the administration was a foreigner who, however good his intentions were, could not earn the approbation of the public at large. The want of a consistent policy in the Departments of Education, Land Revenue, Forest, Devaswoms, etc., was attributed by the Member to the absence of an Executive Council. Nor were the people unfit to enjoy such a reform at the hands of the Government. They fervently hoped that their prayer for an Executive Council would meet with kind consideration at the hands of His Highness the Maha Raja.

Mr. R. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Shertallai Taluk) remarked that an autocratic form of Government was never favoured by any people and that the people were always aspiring for a greater and greater share in the work of administration. In Travancore every reform in the direction of responsible Government had been effected without the people asking for the same. The Legislative Council Regulation, II of 1097, had conferred ample rights on the people. Still the tendency of the people was to ask for more. In the case of the existing popular institutions themselves, there was much scope for improvement. At present there was no difference between a person who paid Rs. 5 and one who paid Rs. 500 as tax in regard to powers of voting. Again, a joint family which paid Rs. 500 as tax was placed on no better footing than a divided family paying a tax of Rs. 5. These inequalities had to be removed. As regards the revised draft rules laying down the constitution and working of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the Member prayed that the followed defects might be removed :—

(1) the institution of the same franchise for both the Assembly and the Legislative Council ;

(2) the limitation as to the nature of the subjects that could be brought forward ;

(3) the powers vested in the President to close the session and send out Members at his discretion ; and

(4) the provision made for putting in a person other than the Dewan to preside over the deliberations of the Assembly.

The Member added that the Assembly should be so reformed as to constitute it into a 'House of Lords' when compared with the reformed Legislative Council

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which should be in the nature of a 'House of Commons'. The present property qualification for electorship to the Assembly with the payment of a tax of Rs. 50 per annum should be kept up and not reduced. The Member then dwelt on the necessity for an Executive Council consisting of officials and non-officials. The decision of the majority should be made binding on the Dewan. The ever-growing number of Departments made it impossible for a single man to satisfactorily look after all of them and the creation of an Executive Council would go a long way to relieve the Dewan of a good deal of his burden and responsibility.

Mr. Narayanan Madhavan Kartavu (Member, Shertallai Taluk) submitted that foreigners in British employ who were brought in as Dewans of the State naturally felt it a delicate task to assert themselves in cases in which the interests of Travancore came into collision with those of the British Government such as Telegraph, Post, etc. This state of affairs would terminate, if an Executive Council was established. The Member also incidentally referred to the necessity for a different treatment being accorded to the joint families paying a large amount of tax to Government and the individual members of divided families paying the minimum tax which would entitle them to return candidates to the Legislative Council and the Popular Assembly and stated that the case of the men under the former category deserved sympathetic consideration at the hands of the Government.

162. Need for giving a greater share to the representatives of the people in the work of administration.

Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) represented that democratic ideas were now prevailing all over the world and that the people everywhere were for securing a larger share in the government of their country. The people of Travancore had earned from their Dewans testimonials for sobriety, moderation and political sagacity, but they were not yet given the share in the administration of the country which they deserved. The Dewan was the real administrator of the State and he was not responsible to the representatives of the people. The Member stated that it would be desirable to have a cabinet of ministers responsible to the people.

As regards the revised draft rules regarding the constitution and working of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly, the member offered the following criticisms:—

(1) The number of subjects to be taken out of the purview of the Popular Assembly had been increased.

(2) The subjects to be discussed at the Assembly had to be selected, under the revised rules, at a meeting presided over by the Peishkar, and such an official control was undesirable.

(3) The same electorate had been introduced for the Legislative Council and the Popular Assembly.

(4) Joint families were not given special consideration in the matter of votes.

(5) Certain disciplinary powers had been given to the President, which were not necessary.

The Member prayed that the defects pointed out above might be removed before the rules were passed finally. He suggested that the Heads of the several Departments might also be made members of the Assembly and that they should be asked to answer criticisms levelled against them by the non-offfcial members.

Finally, the Member deplored the growth of class animosity in the House and prayed that the same be removed in the interests of the State as a whole.

Mr. V. Ramakrishna Panikkar (Member, Kartikapalli Taluk) began by saying that the heart-felt endeavours of His Highness the Maha Raja to train His Highness' subjects in the arts of civics and politics and to enable them to exert a continually growing influence over the administration of the State had had their desired effect, and that the people of Travancore, in view of the training they had in the Legislative Council, the Popular Assembly, the Municipal Councils and

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